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Annotated Bibliography: Educational Inequality in the U.S

There is an unfair and unequal distribution of public-school funding in most states. Unfortunately, this issue is most prevalent among students living in poverty. The main concern is deciding whether school funding is fair. This brings us to the question, what are the reasons why public schools do not receive adequate resources to provide better teachings, technology, and textbooks to students in poverty? A fair funding system is essential to ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students in every state, regardless of where they live and their financial circumstances. Research has shown that these inequalities do affect the performance of children in school. It is possible that these concerns were a result of racial injustices such as segregation and the fact that many African American or Hispanic communities could not afford to attend private schools. Low-income communities could not afford to send their children to private schools, which was one method of segregation. Fast forward to now where we still have these private schools that receive high donations and expensive tuition. These schools help students succeed and enter the most prestigious colleges. Public school students are left to rely on government funding, which is not enough to provide them with modern technology, textbooks, or high-quality scholarships.

While doing my research, I found proof and reason for unequal distribution of fundings throughout schools in America. To understand where and why these disparities exist, my research question's purpose is to gather sufficient information. Once I get a full understanding of the causes of this issue, I hope to find solutions and helpful information to stop this social justice issue.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. Inequality in Teaching and Schooling: How Opportunity Is Rationed to ... <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK223640/>.

This article written by Linda Darling-Hammond discusses the connection between inequalities in school fundings and colored students in America. This is known to be a credible source due to it being a government website and the author being a graduate from Stanford University School of Education. In this article she touches on the wealth gap, connection between inequality and achievement and unfair student to teacher ratios. Linda Darling-Hammond states schools with a higher number of black and brown students tend to have less resources compared to white students. The Minority and poor students suffer disproportionately from inequitable financial systems. Teachers with higher salaries tend to work in high-income schools and teachers with less experience are put to work in low-income schools. Private schools offer a fair ratio of student to teacher ratios, while low-income schools have an overwhelming number of students per teacher. As a result, students are unable to further their education in the future, which can lead to unemployment and poverty in the future.

This article explains how lack of better teachings can cause poverty to continue and why it does not get better. The author states, “Students who are assigned to several ineffective teachers in a row have significantly lower achievement gains—creating differences of as much as 50 percentile points over three years—than those who are assigned to several highly effective teachers in a row.” This explains the reason the achievement gap is primarily caused by inequitable distributions of qualified teachers.

“Inequality in Public School Funding: Key Issues & Solutions for Closing the Gap.” <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/inequality-in-public-school-funding/>.

This source contains up to date information on my topic and there are no grammatical errors. The blog speaks on how policy makers can help ensure US public schools provide quality education to every student by studying policies that have eliminated inequities in public education. There are millions of students and educators in the US who struggle with disparities in the classroom every day. This source states the size and tax burden of districts also distort funding levels, and white districts receive 23 billion more than districts with more students of color. Due to the current funding system for public schools in the United States, there are wealth disparities in communities that are reflected in education.

According to the blog, “The Education Trust’s analysis “Funding Gaps 2018,” school districts with the greatest concentrations of black, Latino, or Native American students receive around \$1,800 less per student than districts educating the least students of color. Between low-income and high-income areas, the funding difference is \$1,000 per student.” It elaborates on how data

suggests that increase in funds can improve test scores, higher graduation rates and increased earnings for students in adulthood. It states that the ability to reduce achievement gaps by 20% is possible through school funding reforms that allocate more funds to low-income schools, whereas school budget cuts negatively impact students' achievement. Through formulas that calculate additional funds for districts with low property values, states and districts can alleviate inequality in public school funding. The tone of this source shows that finding solutions to educational challenges takes innovation and dedication. Educators can develop skills required to close achievement gaps by pursuing an advanced degree in education.

Performance by Kandice Sumner, *YouTube*, YouTube, 28 Nov. 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O7BMa9XGXE>. Accessed 17 Apr. 2023.

Kandice Sumner does TED talk based on how good education may be exclusive to the rich. She earns the status of a credible source because being invited to the TED stage requires ensuring that her work undergoes peer review by other scientists and scholars. Her discussion touches on how some schools in low-income communities of color do not have access to resources that are standard in wealthier schools. Kandice uses a more personal approach when speaking on the topic. She speaks about her own life experiences and her students who attend public schools. Kandice asserts that the slave trade and slave labor generated commerce that funded the public school system. Institutionally speaking, the public school system has never adequately served black and brown children. The statement she mentioned that stood out to me the most was “Public education: keeping poor kids poor since 1954.” This is what she called poverty

insurance. Kandice also spoke on how the quality of your childhood education is directed to what college you end up in and what job you will have access to in adulthood. Everything is connected between the beginning of your education to where you end up in the future.

Carey, Kevin. "Rich Schools, Poor Schools and a Biden Plan." 9 June 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/upshot/biden-school-funding.html>.

Kevin Carey's newspaper article looks at the impact of U.S education funding, and how it amplifies disparities. This is an author of the New York Times which is why I trust this source completely. The author states that the new budget proposal from President Biden includes the introduction of a \$20 billion program for districts dealing with extreme poverty. One fact spoken about was based on the existing system of 16,000 school districts which was created to concentrate resources in majority-white areas. Zahava Stadler, from EdBuild, says this new funding could help change policy and bring some balance back to educational funding. She stated that new funding in the Biden plan "wouldn't just add money where it's needed; it would also offer an important push for states to change the policies that create inequity in state and local funding." Making this plan into action will not be without its difficulties; resistance from a democratic political coalition to limit local spending may emerge as well as pressures on state lawmakers to keep the status quo will persist. Furthermore, Kevin speaks on how the revised funding formula would work remains undisclosed for now but Michael Dannenberg from Education Reform Now suggests that larger subsidies should be sent to states with lower per-

capita income in comparison to those with wealthier populations. Kevin Carey believes that the Biden plan could set an example for more equitable funding systems in the future.

In conclusion, the sources I have provided give insight about the unequal distribution of funds in the public school system in America. It has been reported that students living in poverty experience this disparity the most. This raises the question of why these communities cannot receive adequate resources to better their education. Research shows that racial injustices such as segregation and inability to afford private schools are major factors in this discrepancy. Private schools tend to have more money for scholarships, technology, textbooks, and other educational materials; this allows their students to get ahead and attend prestigious colleges. Public school students lack access to these devices due to lack of government funding which does not offer enough financial aid. Linda Darling-Hammond's article mentions the correlation between inequality and achievement, as well as student teacher ratios for low-income districts. In Kandice Sumner TED talk, she explains how poverty insurance perpetuates the cycle of poverty and highlights the impact of resource deprivation on African American children prior to the 1954 integration. Lastly, the blog from SOE Online speaks on how policy makers can help ensure US public schools provide a quality education to all students, along with adequate funds for low-income schools. Low property values also affect education funding levels and Kevin Carey's article suggests Biden's proposal could revolutionize the current system. My research was successful and I now understand how the disparities began as well as why they still continue. I also learned that there are people trying to make a change which could lead to a big difference in public school fundings.